

HOTELS SERVICES AND REPURCHASE INTENTIONS: A Study of Patronage in Rivers State, Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

This research paper investigates the factors that determine customer satisfaction and repurchase intention in hotels in Port Harcourt Rivers State. The intent is to identify these factors and highlight them for use by the Hotel Entrepreneurs for increase customer repurchase intention and patronage. Quantitative Method was mainly applied by using questionnaires to deliver 400 questionnaires out of which 253 Guests and visitors staying in the various hotels in Port Harcourt City responded. The result of the research demonstrated that there are five major factors which have direct considerable effect on Guest Repurchase Intention. The Guest Satisfaction (.0422), obtained the highest effect among the five predictor variables. Of these predictor variables, the relationship between Brand Image (0.580) and Guest Satisfaction is the strongest one. According to the findings and recommendations, this study is beneficial not only for Guests but also for Hotel's managers. Guests can read this study to get references; Hotel's managers can read to find solutions on how to create, maintain, and retain Guests patronage which enhances repurchase intention and increase profitability for Hotel Industry.

Keywords: Service-quality; Responsiveness, ICT and Brand image, Patronage, Repurchases intention.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism and Hospitality are known to be some of the major factors that contribute to strengthen business developments in any city and the nations. It is also one of the most developing industries that considerably impact on guests who desire to be accommodated in beautiful places. It is fundamental that the hospitality industry, especially the hotels, has been in the increase to meet the demands of guests. Additionally, hotel enterprises are faced with increasing competition from other lodging properties, such as Extended-stay properties, Bed-and-breakfasts and Campgrounds. Therefore, building the sustainable competitive advantage for hotels has become an important consideration and the sustainability and retention of customers for future patronage. Generally, the customer perceptions of service quality, satisfaction and repurchase intentions have to be identified and measured, if the industrial growth is to be sustained. Port Harcourt City is veritably located and properly commercially positioned to attain considerable advantages in attracting tourists. Port Harcourt has a historical culture and natural landscape so that tourism development potentials will be beneficial for gaining profit to the investing entrepreneurs.

However, the challenge of setting up quality luxury hotels (1-4 stars hotels) is slightly demoralizing to the guests and some of their requests unmet. It causes visitors to feel uncomfortable and negatively affect the guests' return intention and repurchase. Studies exploring the correlation between Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and hotel performance are limited in developing countries, especially in Rivers State. Brand Image is also important because it relatively influences the guests repurchase intention. The contention in this study is whether the predictor variables have any significant relationship with the criterion variables. Thus this study investigates how customers' experience mediates the relationship between patronages and repurchases intention.

Prior studies have revealed that customer satisfaction is critical to business performance, and customer loyalty leads to better firms' performance. Regarding satisfaction, it is directly associated with firms' financial performance, profits and decreased operating cost. Satisfaction is also one of the primary marketing goals that the enterprise wants to achieve, in order to ensure patronage and repurchase, (Parasuraman, Zeithanial & Berry, 1988; Khuog, Le, & Phuog, 2015; Anahita,& Rohaizat, 2015).

Likewise other extant literature state that increasing customers' satisfaction will decrease cost of capital. It means that the higher level of satisfaction would lead to better performance. Therefore, enhancing satisfaction helps organization with higher market value. In terms of repurchase intention, it is crucial for the performance as it is one the three forms of customer loyalty that contributes to an increase in profit by boosting revenues, decreasing costs and price sensitivity, (Mihalic & Buhalis, 2013; Karadog & Domanoglu, 2009).

REVIEW OF EXTANT LITERATURE

Khuog, Le, and Phuog, (2015) argue that customer satisfaction is one of the most important contributions to business that enterprise owners would have to provide. Thus, customer satisfaction is defined as the difference between pre-buying expectations and post buying performance. Simultaneously it appears that after finishing a transaction, the satisfaction the customer derives, energizes him and more for more purchases from the supplier. Once the customers are satisfied with the product, repeat purchases are possible, and as they continue their patronage of the enterprise goods and services, the enterprise market share and profitability increases.

Service Quality, (SERVQUAL)

Service quality contributes significant role in trading nationally and internationally. It is the indispensable factor in hospitality and tourism industry, with regard to providing the best offer to visitors. In hospitality and tourism industry, services are defined to be intangible, heterogeneous, and inseparable, that the quality service is difficult for customers to evaluate. Service quality is also identified in three aspects: the consumption quality; the quality of outcomes of progress and the service image of providers. Therefore, the service quality has been the vital factor for organizations which attract customer satisfaction and brand image. This factor considerably affects brand image by implicating "the overall excellence or superiority of a service, as judged by consumers". Due to the distinctive characteristics of services, it is fundamental that hotels significantly understand how to offer constantly high standard in service. Correspondently, good service quality is constructed to make interaction between the guests and hotels staff effective and beneficial, (Parasuraman, Zeithanial & Berry, 1988; Khuog, Le & Phuog, 2015). According to Anahita, and Rohaizat, (2015), five dimensions of service quality are determined and defined below: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy:

- (i). Tangibles are dimensions in Brand image: The physical aspects of the service such as some tangible products perceived by the sense of touch. Tangible products include facilities, equipment, and personnel appearance and communication materials.
- (ii). Reliability is an element in service quality: The consistency of performance and dependability of the service delivery. It also includes trust and empathy from the hotel staff.
- (iii). Responsiveness is an element in service quality: The readiness of hotel's employee to meet the customer demand by providing service.

(iv). Assurance: Trust, confidence, competence, credibility and courtesy from hotel's employees to guests.

(v). Empathy: Accessibility, individual caring and elaborate attention from hotels employees to customers.

Information Communication Technology, (ICT)

Another important part in contributing to increase profitability, reduce hotel expense, upgrade the efficiency, information sharing on hotel productivity and performance is Information communication technology. Guest satisfaction, guest convenience and operational efficiency are also affected by the information and communication technology. Technology supports hospitality organizations to widen network, to convey the pure concept of business relationship and to provide the specific and special to customers. Besides that, technology has mutual impact on customer service by assisting to get access to the customer contact thus enhancing the service experience, (Mihalic & Buhalis, 2013; Karadog & Domanoglu, 2009).

According to Maja, Saura and Descals (2018), Information and communication technology focuses on the guest perception, especially in hospitality industry. Hospitality industry is a guest-oriented market so that technology applied in regards with facilitating guest demand and satisfaction. ICT including system of room reservation, procurement and inventory system, wireless internet, email, electronic transactions and hotel websites is the key for enhancing hotel performance.

Brand Image

Brand image is logical or emotional perceptions that customer specifically attain. It is defined as an informative connection between service providers to customer memory. In hospitality industry, brand image considers as hotel image representing the tangibility, inseparability, perishability and heterogeneity of a service company's offering. Therefore, it is an external value only if customers are assessing one kind of product or service prior to purchasing. Brand image plays a special role in Service Company because dominant brand image increase customer's trust and support customer to understand the intangible. Brand image will impress guest's mind during their stay so that perceiving the intangible hotel experience is the considerable obstacle for hotel industry, (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990; Keller, 1993; Schulz & Omwer, 2012; Zeithanil, 1988).

According to Kayaman and Arash, (2007), creating strong brand give customer access to hotel services and better perceive the tangible characteristics of hotel products. Besides that, customer satisfaction and service influence positively the brand image which in turn impact on customer loyalty. Therefore, brand image is significant mediating factor in gaining the repurchase intention from the dimension of customer loyalty.

Customer Satisfaction

When the customer perception exceeds the customer expectation, customer satisfaction will occur. Customer satisfaction plays an indispensable role of creating and maintaining the relationship between service providers and customers. As a matter of fact, it noticeably effects on the service quality and other behavioral variables. Customer satisfaction can be defined to be the user's fulfillment demands and the level to which extent of comfortable or uncomfortable fulfillment. Customer satisfaction also has direct effect on repurchase intention that makes service organization achieve more profit from the loyal guests. These evidences intensely suggest that customer satisfaction is the result from the consumer expectation before using hotel service and their consumption. Subsequently, service providers have to satisfy customers by upgrading hotel service, creating strong brand, (Mohajerani & Miremadi, 2012; Cronin, Brady & Hult, 2000; Oliver, 1991).

Repurchase Intention

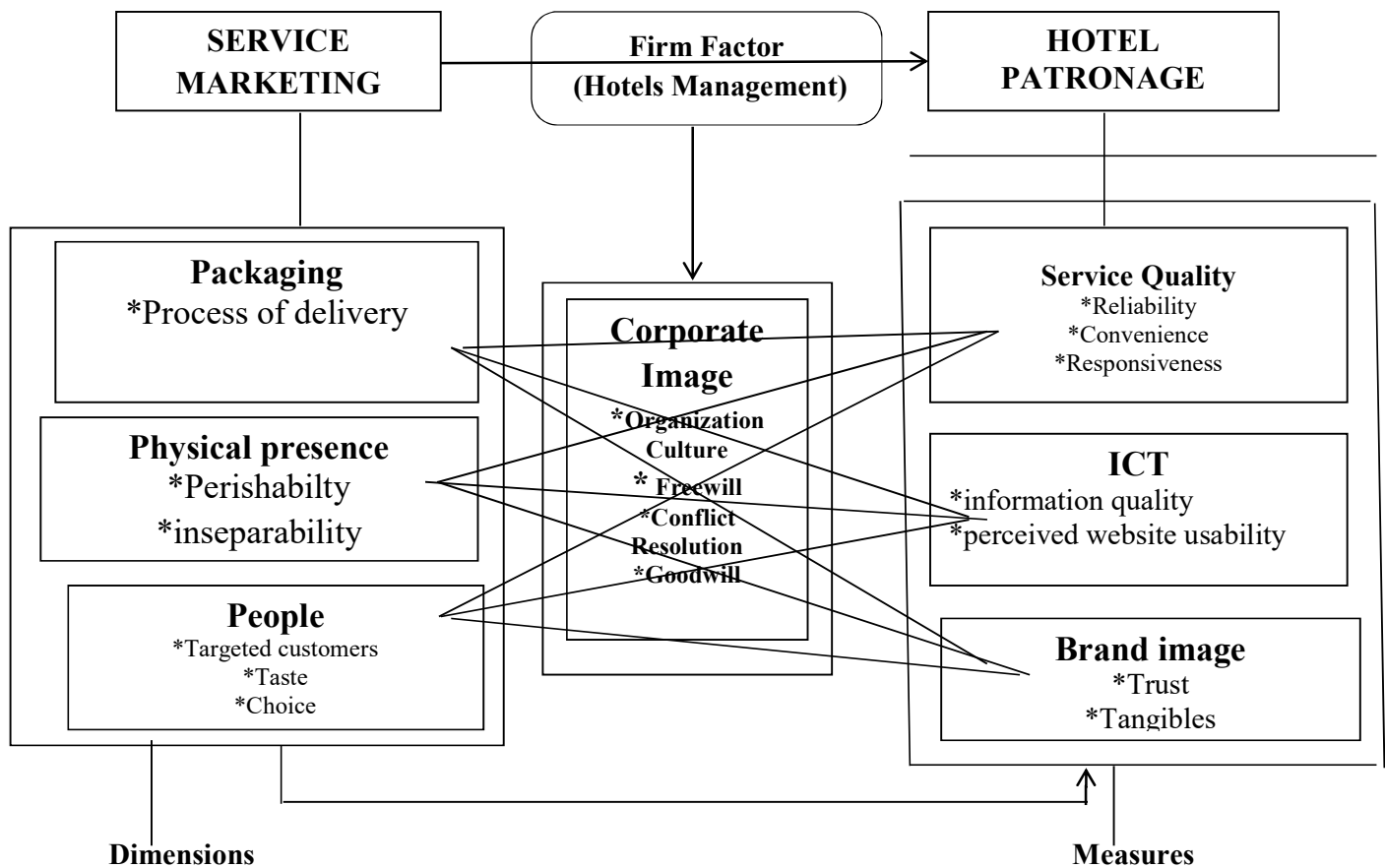
A customer’s readiness to connect and maintain relationship with the service provider is repurchasing intention. The purchase of guests has to be repeated many times in one particular place and engage in future activity with that service provider, for the repurchase intention to clear.

Liu and Bernhardt, (1998), defined repurchase intention as the likelihood of business that consumer will increase or maintain his buying power in the business of the supplier. Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman, (1996), conducted a study to discover the positive and substantial connection between the perception of service quality and their repeat patronage. The relationship between service quality and repurchase intentions is objective and specific. Furthermore, Gremler and Brown, (1991), studied service loyalty definition in order to identify guest’s attitude and manner toward service providers. The repurchase intention is included in service loyalty. Finally, the purpose of gaining profitability is to achieve the elevated level of repurchase intention, especially for hotel enterprises.

Figure: 2.1.

Figure: 2.1.

Operationalized Framework of: REPURCHASE INTENTIONS IN SERVICE AND PATRONAGE OF HOTELS IN RIVERS STATE



Source: (Author’s construct, 2024).

Hypotheses Development

The dimension of service marketing consists of packaging, physical presence, people and perishability of services if not consumed at the time of offering or presentation. Conversely customer patronage will be assured if there are quality services, reliability, responsiveness, convenience, information quality, and trust among others. These will no doubt draw customers to a particular Hotel or Mall. Thus in orders to see how these variables interface with each other, hypotheses are constructed and outlined below. These will be tested in the course of the study for confirmation or negation, on the effect customer patronage of luxury hotels in Rivers State.

H1: Packaging in service delivery has no relationship with service quality and patronage.

H2: Packaging in service is not effect by information and web accessibility.

H3: Packaging has no relationship with firm's brand image.

H4: Physical presence has no effect on service quality.

H5: Physical presence has no relationship with accessible and quality information.

H6: Physical presence has no relationship with the brand image.

H7: Consumers choice and taste have effect on the firm's service quality.

H8: Consumers demand and choice have no relationship with accessible information and web presence.

H9: Consumers choice has no relationship with the firm's brand image which is trust.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The design of any constructive work is the plan of actions to be followed and implemented and in this section the plan will be outlined. In the previous section the focus of this study has been discussed elaborately, supported by the important theoretical insights from the last decades. There are various designs this research work can be conducted, namely: quantitatively or qualitatively, or a combination of the two which is the mix approach or triangulation, this study adopts quantitative approach.

Population and Sample size

The population of this research is all the Guests/Tourists that visit and stay in the luxurious hotels in Port Harcourt, city Rivers State, thus an infinite one. Hotels management are required to create, maintain and retain the Guests that visit and stay in their Hotels to ensure continuous patronage overtime, so the factors that can assist them achieve this goal is the aim of this study.

The guests regularly visit for up to six months, were the targeted respondents for the survey and the hotels assisted the researcher to locate them. These respondents (guests) were infinite in number as they cannot be determined. Therefore, it is sufficient to conveniently deliver up to 300 survey questionnaire to the guests. However 253 respondents answered their questionnaire and granted the researcher oral interviews on the areas that requires some clarity relative to how they feel, while others did not show interest or commitment. Items in the survey questionnaire were based on the dimensional factors of the Predictor (Independent) and Criterion (dependent) variables in the reviewed related literature within the research context. The questionnaire were developed on the basis of Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = extremely unfavorable; to 5 = extremely favorable.

The instruments that were used for the purpose of this study consist of structured questionnaire that are framed around the predictor variables. The in-depth interview questions are also constructed along the same line of independent variables, and are designed to elicit the required experiential answers from the respondents. The questionnaire frames are depersonalized to eliminate the researcher's bias. So too is the in-depth interview questions which allows for flexibility and elicits quality of opinion and richness to ensure robustness.

Preliminary Contingency tables were constructed to organize the primary data into simple percentages and frequencies, (these tables will not be shown as they are numerous). However the descriptive statistics tables where the preliminary data are factored and compounded for statistical tests at 0.05 level of significance was shown. Probability-value (p-value), Analysis of variance (ANOVA), Tukey Multiple Comparisons (TMC) and Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA), were carried out to ensure robustness. These various tests results were then used to accept or reject the study hypotheses and by extension assist the author's conclusion, (Diamantopoulos, 2000; Diamantopoulos & Schlegelmilch, 1997; & Doherty, et al, 2003).

Exploratory Factor Analysis, (EFA) was applied in this part in order to test the validity and reliability of the scales. For the group of independent variables, there are items distributed in 4 factors with the value of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin as .861. This coefficient value is greater than 0.5 so that it is satisfied the standard condition and its significant value is 0.00 which is smaller than 0.05. The eigen value testing is conducted to release the positive result. All the eigen values of 4 predictor variables are greater than 1 and its total variance explained was 53.982 %. According to the Table: 4.2, these 4 predictor variables were renamed as TANGIBLE, (Tangibility), RESPON, (Responsiveness), BRANIMA, (Brand Image) and ICT. The below table would show the Cronbach's Alphas for 4 factors which are ranging from .684 to .780. Among these 4 factors, TANGIBLE (Tangibility) has the highest Cronbach's Alpha which syndicates 0.780. Conversely, the ICT has the lowest rate with only 0.684.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section of the study presents the data collected, analysis and interpretation of the study findings.

i). Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table: 4.1.

Demographics of the Participants

Items		Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)	
Gender	Male	154	60.9	
	Female	99	39.1	
	Total	253	100	
Age Group	18-25	25	9.9	
	25-35	79	31.2	
	35-45	100	39.5	
	45-55	31	12.3	
	Over 55	18	7.1	
	Total	253	100	
Marriage	Married	131	51.8	
	Single	122	48.3	
	Total	253	100	
Occupation	Students	8	3.2	
	Employed	226	89.3	
	Unemployed	1	0.4	
	Retired	18	7.1	

	Total	253	100
	Business	102	40.3
	Leisure	149	58.9
Purpose of visits	Friends/Relatives	2	0.8
	Total visits	253	100

From the table 4.1, above the number of male participants was higher than that of female participants: (60.9% compared to 39.1%). In terms of age: (25-35(31.2%) and 35-45(39.5%) followed by group of 45-55 (12.3%). This indication shows that the middle age group has the potential dimension for spending money to enjoy the services in luxury hotels. The couples constituted for (51.8%), while individuals who have not been married accounted for (48.2%). For occupation, people who have jobs made up of the largest proportion (89.3%), then retired people with (7.1%), followed by the group of students (3.2%) and the unemployed (0.4%). Most of the purposes of their visits were for leisure which accounted for (58.9%) and business (40.4%). Generally, the demographic data illustrates the overview of the respondents' background participating in this research. It could be viewed as a general image of practical condition of Port Harcourt city hotel lodging, especially for luxury hotels. There is diversity of guest visiting Port Harcourt to stay and enjoy their trip, like the 25-45 years old group is especially concerned.

ii). Relationship between Criterion Variables of Guests Repurchase Intention, Guests Satisfaction and the Predictor Variables

Table: 4.2:
CORRELATION BETWEEN VARIABLES (PREDICTOR & CRITERION)

	REPURINT	1	2	3	4	5
1. BRANIMA	.580*	1				
2. TANGIBLE	.544*		.342* 1			
3. RESPON	.583*	.456*	.516*	1		
4. ICT	.537*	.454*	.497*	.507*	1	
5. GUESATIS	.686*	.521*	.461*	.519	.443*	1
Mean	3.71	3.61	3.65	3.65	3.67	3.70
SD	192	442	536	489	449	431

Note: Correlation is significant at .05 levels

The Table: 4.2: Shows that the positive correlation between independent variable; mediator, (Guest-Satisfaction) and dependent variable (Guest Repurchase Intention). The first column of the Table showed the fact that GUESATIS is the variable which obtain the highest correlation value of 0.686 and $p < .05$. It means that GUESATIS has the most intensive interaction on REPURINT among five predictors. The lowest impact is for the ICT which reached to the correlation of $r=0.537$. Correspondingly, all five factors relatively obtain the correlation value which are more than 0.5 such as BRANIMA, ($r=0.580, p < .05$); TANGIBLE, ($r=0.544, p < .05$) and RESPON, ($r=.583, p < .05$); ICT($r=.537, p < .05$) and GUESATIS ($r= .686, p < .05$) In this situation, when guests were satisfied with hotel's brand name; information communication technology; employee's responsiveness and modern equipment, guests will return to hotel to stay and enjoy.

iii). Factors Directly Affecting Guest Satisfaction

From the Table 4.3: a tracking can be done on the unique independent variables which effect on GUESATIS. The result shows the fact that there are three variables certified with maintaining the

relationship with GUESATIS due to the lower Sig. value ($p < .05$). They were BRANIMA ($B = .300; p = .000$); TANGIBLE, ($B = .154; p = .002$); RESPON, ($B = .205; p = .000$). ICT, ($B = .149; p = .002$)

Table: 4.3
COEFFICIENTS & PREDICTOR VARIABLES & GUESATS

Variables	(B) Unstandardised Coefficients	Sign
Constant	.979	.000
Branima	.300	.000
Tangible	.154	.002
Resp	.205	.000
ICT	.149	.002

Note: Criterion variable: GUESATIS-Guests Satisfaction
Predictor variables: Brand Image, Tangibility, Responsiveness, ICT
ANOVA: F(4.248)=43.155, Sig.=.000, p less than .05
Model summary Adjusted R Square=.401

iv). FACTORS DIRECTLY AFFECTING GUEST REPURCHASE INTENTION

Table: 4.4:
COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN PREDICTOR VARIABLES AND REPURINT

Variables	(B) Unstandardised Coefficients	Sign
Constant	.280	.171
Branima	.229	.000
TANG	.154	.001
RESP	.148	.005
ICT	.137	.013
GUESATIS	.422	.000

Note: Criterion Variable: REPURINT-Guest Repurchase Intention
Predictors: Brand Image, Tangible, Responsiveness, ICT, Guest Satisfaction
ANOVA: F=79.758, Sign. =.000, p less .05; Model Summary: Adjust R Square=.610

From the Table: 4.4: above, the researcher investigated on these factors which impacted on repurchases intention, (REPURINT). The results illustrate that all predictor variables and mediator affecting on this criterion variable (REPURINT) due to the lower Sig. value ($p < .05$). They were BRANIMA, ($B = .229; p = .00$); TANGIBLE ($B = .154; p = .001$); RESPON ($B = .148; p = .005$); ICT ($B = .137; p = .013$); GUESATIS ($B = .422; p = .00$).

v). indirectly and Total Causal Effects on Guest Repurchase Intention

The result of multiple regression illustrated in table 4.5:, that guest repurchase intention was indirectly impacted by three predictor such as: BRANIMA ($r = .1260$); TANGIBLE ($r = .065$); RESPON ($r = .0865$). Figure 4.1: below shows the summarized research findings. These evidences proved that when hotel has a good image, great tangibility and excellent employee's responsiveness; the hotel may get high rate of repurchase intention guests. However, ICT has no obvious indirect relationship with Guest Repurchase Intention because the Sig. value of ICT is bigger than .05 ($p = .123$) in terms of defining the direct relationship with Guest Satisfaction.

Table: 4.5:
DIRECT, INDIRECT & TOTAL CAUSAL EFFECTS

VARIABLES	DIRECT	INDIRECT	TOTAL	LLCI	ULCI
BRANIMA	.229	.1260	0.3556	.6810	1784
TANGIBLE	.154	.065	0.219	.0294	1031
RESPON	.148	.0865	0.2345	.0453	1324
ICT	.137	--	0.137	.0033	0814
GUESATIS	.422	--	0.422		
Total	1.09	.2781	1.3861		

The table: 4.5: demonstrates the direct and indirect effect from four predictor variables and the mediating variable (GUESATIS) on the criterion variable (REPURCINT). Lower (LL) and upper (UL) boundary of the confidence interval are shown in the last two right columns. Preachers & Hayes, (2008), state that boots- trapping methods are used to confirm the significance of indirect effects. The theory explained to check whether zero (0) lies between the lower (LL) and Upper (UL) boundary of the confidence interval. In case, there is zero (0) which lies between Lower (LL) and Upper (UL), that indirect effect is not significant or indirect relationship is no longer affected. On the other hand, the indirect effect is confirmed with 95% confidence. Among these factors, the GUESATIS achieves the largest value with $B = .422$. The second largest value is for BRANIMA with $B = .229$. The lowest contribution to the prediction of REPURINT is ICT with the value of $B = .002$. Generally, the total direct effect on REPURINT is 1.09. Correspondingly, only three variables (BRANIMA, TANGIBLE and RESPON) are satisfied with that theory. The indirect effect of ICT is rejected. Therefore, the total indirect effect on REPURINT is .2781.

According to the data analysis, the discussion of this section clearly indicates the direct and significant effects of three predictor variables on Guest Satisfaction. These variables are Tangibility, Responsiveness and Brand Image. Sirawit, Naznul & Khang, (2011), conducted a research about the ICT adoption in hospitality industry. The result suggests that ICT has no considerable influence on guest satisfaction, but this study shows a different results, that ICT have significant influence on guests' satisfaction and repurchase intention. The result in this research is also logical and is supported by some previous studies in Malaysian hospitality industry. Service quality and corporate brand image are also investigated through customer satisfaction and repurchase intention and these were highlighted contribute to customer satisfaction and repurchase intention which are positive. This research also confirmed five considerable relationships between the predictor (independent) factors and Guest Repurchase Intention (REPURINT) which includes Brand Image (BRANIMA), Tangibility (TANGIBLE), Responsiveness (RESPON), Information Communication Technology (ICT) and the mediating factor – Guest Satisfaction (GUESATIS). Some studies in extant literature identify determinants of hotel's guest satisfaction and repeat patronage and focus on factors which impact on the relationship between customer satisfactions and repurchase intention, (Choi & Chu, (2001); Yi & La, (2004); Sriastava & Narendra, (2013); Gremler & Brown, (1997). Moreover, Lee, (2003), supported these factors effects on Guest Satisfaction and Repurchase Intention, to be positively significant.

Similar discussion is applied to the indirect effect of predictor variables on Guest Repurchase Intention through the mediating factor – The Guest Satisfaction. Based on the result of Multiple Regression and Path Analysis on the previous section, the researcher states that the predictor variable factors have significant relationships with REPURINT. These variables are Tangibility, Responsiveness, ICT and Brand Image, which have positive indirect with Guest Repurchase

Intention. Kim, (2007), suggested that the relationship between service-quality, customer satisfaction and repurchase intention is significantly concentrated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researchers make the following recommendations for improved quality services delivery in hotel industry:

(i). The result of this study showed that four predictor variables, positive effect on criterion variables— Guest Repurchase Intention. Thus Hotel managers, especially for people who are working in the luxury hotels strategic implementation capacity, should pay attention and strengthen these factors in terms of increasing the return patronage rate. This supports the hotels optimization effort for profits and revenue. According to the survey results, hotel managers should focus on the service quality based on the customer perception and expectation, the ambiances of hotel, employee's responsiveness, the image of hotel and hotel's information communication technology in order to optimize the guest satisfaction and repurchase intention.

(ii). For TANGIBLE and RESPON: tangible products of hotel include the interior design of hotels, hotel's equipment, employee's uniforms, the ambient condition of hotels, food and beverage services, and others. In this survey, the respondent's feedbacks mainly focus on the interior design of hotel and employee's appearance. The physical facilities such as sofa, welcome seats, lights, air conditioners, room facilities or entertaining facilities such as swimming pools, game tools, and others, would make guests feel comfortable when they are staying in the hotels. The possible solution is to pay attention towards tangible elements including architectural design of hotel, unique style of music, scent, color and layout.

(iii). The employee's appearance is also important because hotel's staffs represent the hotel's image and its core value. The better employee's appearance, the better guests feel satisfied. Professional appearance of hotel's employees demonstrates that hotel not only cares about the guests, but also cares about the hotel's employees who currently are the indispensable parts of hotel. Treating hotel's employees (internal marketing), well would make guests feel satisfied because they directly serve and satisfy the guest's need. Similarly, responsiveness is an important factor that affects Guest Satisfaction and Guest Repurchase Intention.

(iv). Therefore, improving professional qualifications of the hotel's staff is a significant issue. Guests feel comfortable when they receive the prompt service, hotel's staff support, hotel's staff's response, quick problem solving from staff. Especially, hotels employees should maintain respect with guests. These characteristics require professionalism and carefulness from hotel's employees. The hotels can from time to time sharpen employee's soft skills and problem - solving skills; hotel can also build trust and reliability to customers. Subsequently, guests would choose to stay in such hotels the next time they come to the city.

(v). For BRANIMA, the brand image represents the reputation, the reliability and the assurance of its organization. At the beginning of selecting hotel for staying, brand is one of the priorities that guests are concerned with before paying to purchase rooms, and hotel's service. Therefore, brand image is an important factor for determining the reputation level and hotel's attraction. The better brand image is, the better guests trust. Hotel managers can build the hotel image by upgrading service quality, employee's appearance, innovating technologies. The process of building good brand image should be facilitated to comply with the suitable communication policy and existing regulations.

(vi). Positive brand image not only support guest's trust but also gain the return patronage of guests. Additionally, many respondents suggested that they prefer staying in International hotels than Luxury Local hotels, due to its brand name. Hotels like: Sheraton, Sofitel, Park Hyatt, Intercontinental, Pullman, Lotte Legend, among others, are the names that is preferable than those luxury local hotels such as Royal Residence Hotel, Echelon Heights Hotels, Riana Stars Hotels, among others. Brand Image can show the differentiation, familiar perception, luxury feelings, and spacious place for Guests. The common purpose of brand image is to get the guest's perception and guest's expectation in line. Therefore, this study suggests that a positive hotel image can lead to repurchase intention. This means that hotel's staffs working in Sales & Marketing Department should develop the customer's perceptions image strategies, so brand as to ensure an acceptable brand image.

(vii). For ICT, this study demonstrated that useful Information Communication Technology such as easily accessible website and email system; strongly private security system; good wireless Internet connection and beneficial Global Distribution System are very important. Therefore, Internet connection is one of the indispensable criteria that the Hotels need to handle while they are working. The Hotels security must be privatized and strictly protected. Guests feel comfortable and safe when staying in hotels which offer guests the best place devoid of threat. Global Distribution System is a network performed by hotels that enables automated transactions between hotels and travel agencies. It also operates the transactions between guests and hotels when guests book rooms in advance via online. Likewise, airline reservations, hotel bookings, cinema reservations, car rentals are related to Global Distribution System. It is the fact that business travelers or leisure travelers who use these information communication technologies provided by luxury hotels feel satisfied as this research survey shows. Therefore, they choose to be loyal member in these hotels that they have selected. Upgrading the infrastructure, especially for information communication technology not only would help the guests enjoy their stay but also support hotels to get the higher repurchase intention, and consistent patronage they are looking for.

LIMITATIONS

Limitation does not suggest destruction the work done, rather they give directions as to what has been done, and indicates areas of further research. This study is limited by the units of analysis: the 253 respondents who provided answers to the researcher's questionnaire. It is also limited to Rivers State, Nigeria in terms of geographical scope. Time constraint was a challenge, hence the choice of convenience sampling technique. A larger quantity of samples would have been sort after in the absence of these limitations. The quantity of cooperative respondents was 253, and it is believed that these can give the study acceptable threshold of guests' opinions staying in luxury hotels in Port Harcourt City.

CONCLUSION

Generally, the above recommendations will help Hotel managers to understand their customers' perception and customers' expectation when staying/living in their Luxury Hotels. The presence of professional, effective hotel's equipment, differentiated hotel's image and innovative information communication technology greatly influenced repurchase intention. Therefore, Hotels can achieve profit through the loyal guests who repeatedly purchase their service and stay to enjoy them and do their business.

FURTHER RESEARCH PROPOSAL

The researcher suggests that further research should be conducted and more time given; and more factors selected to build more effective research model. The accuracy and effectiveness of the study should be better when additional factors are investigated such as: Price, Perception, Buzz marketing,

Focused innovation and Word-of-Mouth marketing. Future study can consider incorporating these known factors into further research models to improve the investigation.

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